

Serial No.: 10/035,546
Attorney Docket No.: F-426

Patent

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as shown below.

1. (currently amended) A system for sorting and sanitizing mailpieces comprising:

a component for singulating and feeding a mailpiece along a feed path of the system, the feed path having a transport belt;

a sanitizer module positioned downstream of the component for singulating and feeding the mailpiece, the sanitizer for sanitizing the mailpiece;

wherein the sanitizer module acts as ~~including~~ a buffer allowing the mailpieces to deskew onto the transport belt;

a system for reading the mailpiece and determining a destination bin; and

a bin module comprising two or more destination bins for receiving a mailpiece after a destination bin has been determined by the system for reading the mailpiece and determining the destination bin.

2. (original) The system as claimed in claim 1 whereby the mailpiece is sanitized as it passes through the sanitizer module.

3. (original) The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the system for reading the mailpiece and determining a destination bin comprises:

a control system for providing processing of information read from the mailpiece and an addressee database for providing addressee information which is compared to information read from the mailpiece in order to determine the appropriate addressee and destination bin for the mailpiece.

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4. (original) The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the sanitizer module comprises:

a first set of guide walls, each guide wall in the first set of guide walls positioned parallel to the feed path and facing the other guide wall forming an alley along the feed path;

a second set of guide walls positioned down stream of the first set of guide walls along the feed path and forming a gap along the feed path between the first set of guide walls and the second set of guide walls, each guide wall in the second set of guide walls positioned parallel to the feed path and facing the other guide wall forming an alley along the feed path; and

a sanitization apparatus positioned along the feed path in the area of the gap along the feed path between the first set of guide walls and the second set of guide walls

5. (original) The system as claimed in claim 4 and whereby the mailpiece is sanitized as it passes by the gap along the feed path between the first set of guide walls and the second set of guide walls.

6. (previously amended) The system as claimed in claim 4 wherein the sanitization apparatus comprises at least one apparatus from the group comprising: an irradiation apparatus, an ultraviolet light source, a microwave emitter, an ozone generator or a chemical mister.

7. (original) The system as claimed in claim 4 wherein at least a portion of the feed path comprises a transport belt which travels along an edge of the first set guide walls and an edge of the second set of guide walls.

8. (original) The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the sanitizer module comprises:

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a first set of first and second driven belts, each driven belt in the first set of driven belts positioned parallel to the feed path and facing the other driven belt and forming an alley along the feed path;

a second set of first and second driven belts positioned down stream of the first set of first and second driven belts along the feed path and forming a gap along the feed path between the first set of first and second driven belts and the second set of first and second driven belts, each driven belt in the second set of driven belts positioned parallel to the feed path and facing the other driven belt forming an alley along the feed path; and

a sanitization apparatus positioned along the feed path in the area of the gap along the feed path between the first set of driven belts and the second set of driven belts.

9. (previously amended) The system as claimed in claim 8 wherein the sanitization apparatus comprises at least one apparatus from the group consisting of: an irradiation apparatus, an ultraviolet light source, a microwave emitter, an ozone generator and a chemical mister.

10. (original) The system as claimed in claim 8 wherein at least a portion of the feed path comprises a transport belt which travels along an edge of the first set of first and second driven belts and the second set of first and second driven belts.

11. (original) The system as claimed in claim 1 further comprising:
a sanitization area, the sanitization area containing the component for singulating and feeding a mailpiece and the sanitizer module.

12. (original) The system as claimed in claim 11 further comprising:
a clean area, the clean area for containing the bin module, the clean area connected to the sanitization area at a sanitization zone, the sanitization area having

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an area pressure lesser than an air pressure in the clean area whereby air flow is from the clean area to the sanitization area.

13. (currently amended) A system for sorting and sanitizing incoming mailpieces comprising:

- a component for singulating and feeding a mail piece along a feed path of the system;

- a sanitizer module positioned downstream of the component for singulating and feeding the mailpiece, the sanitizer for decontaminating the mailpiece, the sanitizer module comprises:

- a first set of guide walls, each guide wall in the first set of guide walls positioned parallel to the feed path and facing the other guide wall forming an alley along the feed path;

- a second set of guide walls positioned down stream of the first set of guide walls along the feed path and forming a gap along the feed path between the first set of guide walls and the second set of guide walls, each guide wall in the second set of guide walls positioned parallel to the feed path and facing the other guide wall forming an alley along the feed path; and

- a sanitization apparatus positioned along the feed path in the area of the gap along the feed path between the first set of guide walls and the second set of guide walls, the sanitization apparatus comprises at least one apparatus from the group consisting of: an irradiation apparatus, an ultraviolet light source, a microwave emitter, an ozone generator or a chemical mister;

- a system for reading the mailpiece and determining a destination bin, the system for reading the mailpiece and determining a destination bin comprises:

- a control system for providing processing of information read from the mailpiece and an addressee database for providing addressee information which is compared to information read from the mailpiece in order to determine the appropriate addressee and destination bin for the mailpiece; and

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a bin module comprising two or more destination bins for receiving a mailpiece after a destination bin has been determined by the system for reading the mailpiece and determining the destination bin;

wherein at least a portion of the feed path comprises a transport belt which travels along an edge of the first set guide walls and an edge of the second set of guide walls;

wherein the sanitizer module acts as ~~including~~ a buffer allowing the mailpieces to deskew onto the transport belt; and

whereby the mailpiece is sanitized as it passes by the gap along the feed path between the first set of guide walls and the second set of guide walls.

14. (original) The system as claimed in claim 13 further comprising:
a sanitization area, the sanitization area containing the component for singulating and feeding a mailpiece and the sanitizer module.

15. (original) The system as claimed in claim 14 further comprising:
a clean area, the clean area for containing the bin module, the clean area connected to the sanitization area at a sanitization zone, the sanitization area having an area pressure lesser than an air pressure in the clean area whereby air flow is from the clean area to the sanitization area.